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Operational activities of the United Nations for international development cooperation: reports of the Executive Boards of the United Nations Development Programme/United Nations Population Fund, the United Nations Children's Fund and the World Food Programme

Annual reports of the Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme and the Executive Director of the United Nations Population Fund to the Economic and Social Council

1. In its decision 2002/4 of 5 February 2002, the Executive Board of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and of the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) took note of the reports to the Economic and Social Council (DP/2002/7 and DP/FPA/2002/1). The Executive Board also decided to transmit the reports, together with the comments made on them, to the Council for consideration at its substantive session of 2002.

2. Part one of the present document contains the report of the Administrator of UNDP; part two contains the report of the Executive Director of UNFPA.

3. The comments of the Executive Board on the reports are contained in part three, which is an extract from the report on the first regular session of 2002 of the Executive Board (DP/2002/10).

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Part one
Report of the Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme

Issues

The present report was prepared in conformity with a joint format agreed to by the United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations Population Fund and the United Nations Children's Fund.

It addresses the implementation of the reform programme of the Secretary-General, including progress made in the context of the United Nations Development Group, and the provisions of the comprehensive triennial policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system for 2001. It also includes a discussion of relations with the World Bank, follow-up to international conferences and the Millennium Declaration, and humanitarian and disaster-relief assistance.

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I. Implementation of the reform programme of the Secretary-General and the provisions of the comprehensive triennial policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system for 2001

A. Structures and mechanisms

1. The United Nations Development Group (UNDG) has been restructured to mirror the new Board for Coordination of Chief Executives of the United Nations system (formerly the Administrative Committee on Coordination (ACC)) with its High-level Committee on Programmes and the High-level Committee on Management. This should strengthen relations between UNDG and the organizations of the United Nations system that are not members of UNDG.

2. The United Nations Development Group Office (DGO) has continued to provide Internet services both at headquarters and at the country level through the provision of best practices and examples of successful common country assessment (CCA) and United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) exercises. Two Internet vehicles have been set up in this respect: UNDG DevLink and the CCA/UNDAF Learning Network (RCNet). Since its inception in October 2000, DevLink has had more than 70,000 hits. A fifth topic, on HIV/AIDS, has recently been added to DevLink.

3. In the past year, UNDG has cooperated with other executive committees in the preparation of two important policy documents: with the Executive Committee on Peace and Security (ECPS) on peace-building, and with the Executive Committee on Humanitarian Affairs (ECHA) on relations between the United Nations and European institutions in the development and humanitarian fields. A joint UNDG/ECHA working group on Afghanistan has been established to guide the United Nations operational response in Afghanistan under the integrated mission task force (IMTF).

4. Five United Nations Houses were designated in 2001 (Japan, Kyrgyzstan, Namibia, Paraguay and Trinidad and Tobago). Funding has been procured for a pilot programme to facilitate the implementation of common services at the country level.

Problems encountered and lessons learned

5. There is further need for the harmonization of financial, administrative and personnel systems, including common personnel policies. The UNDG Management Group has set up two ad hoc working groups: harmonization of personnel policies; and financial policies.

6. There is a need to speed up the identification of training priorities for 2002 and to develop a monitoring and evaluation system to measure the impact of this training. The UNDG Working Group on Training is currently preparing guidelines for this issue.

Recommendations

7. The Council may wish to:

(a) Take note of the UNDG structures now in place and welcome the efforts of UNDG to rationalize its subsidiary machinery;

(b) Reaffirm the need for continued, close cooperation between UNDG members and the subsidiary machinery of the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination;

(c) Encourage further use of UNDG machinery for the implementation of the resolution on the comprehensive triennial policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system for 2001;

(d) Welcome the efforts towards the establishment of United Nations Houses and the development of common services.

B. Funding and resources

8. In accordance with Executive Board decision 99/23 and others, UNDP made further progress in 2000 in implementing the multi-year funding framework. At the third regular session 2000 of the Executive Board, the Administrator presented his report on the updated allocation framework and the multi-year funding framework (DP/2000/31).

9. Based on the levels of voluntary contributions to regular resources in 1999 and 2000, the projections for 2002 and 2003 noted in document DP/1999/30 of $1.0 and $1.1 billion respectively have been adjusted to $800 and $900 million respectively. These will become the revised income projections for the biennium 2002-2003, amounting to a regular resource base of $1.76 billion for the biennium. This reflects a two-year delay in achieving the voluntary contribution targets as initially envisaged. Based on recent increases by the majority of donors, the level of voluntary contributions is expected to increase in 2001 after annual declines over eight consecutive years. This turnaround needs to be sustained to place the organization on a more sound financial footing. For the four-year period 2000-2003, voluntary contributions to regular resources are now projected at $3.0 billion.

Problems encountered and lessons learned

10. UNDP has gradually evolved into a multi-funded organization. Over the years, other resource contributions (i.e., non-core) have grown significantly. In 2000, other resources amounted to $1.5 billion, comprising $571 million in third-party co-financing (trust funds and third-party cost-sharing) and $933 million in programme-country cost-sharing. Thus, total income projections underlying the integrated resource framework for the period 2000-2003 amount to $9.4 billion, comprising $5.6 billion in donor resources, of which $3.0 billion is projected for voluntary contributions to regular core resources; $2.6 billion in third-party co-financing and $3.8 billion in programme-country cost-sharing.

11. The erosion in regular resources over the past years has severely impaired the ability of UNDP to produce the development outcomes envisioned in the country cooperation frameworks, and the strategic results framework of the multi-year funding framework. This has had a particularly adverse impact on the struggle of low-income countries against poverty. The consequences of the funding shortfall also threaten the ability of the organization to sustain a strong global platform and a

universal country presence on behalf of the United Nations system and the international community at large.

Recommendations

12. The Council may wish to:

(a) Welcome the progress achieved in reviewing, updating and improving the multi-year funding framework;

(b) Welcome the increased levels of funding available to UNDP, with core funding levels representing an increase for the first time in many years;

(c) Make recommendations on the continuing need to strengthen core funding as the bedrock of the organization;

(d) Make recommendations on the future of the United Nations pledging conference, taking into account the experience of UNDP and other funds and programmes with the multi-year funding framework.

C. The resident coordinator system

13. In the past year, the strengthening of the capacity of the resident coordinator system remained a top priority for UNDP as steward of the system on behalf of the Secretary-General. A new modality for the resident coordinator competency assessment was pilot tested with five resident coordinator system and the Inter-Agency Steering Committee members. Six assessments were held during the period 28 August-30 September 2000 for 66 candidates.

14. Selection procedures have resulted in a wider pool of resident coordinators, with emphasis on increasing the candidates from organizations other than UNDP. A more determined effort was also made in order to increase the number of female candidates in the resident coordinator pool, to be nominated by the organization concerned.

15. By December 2000, out of 120 resident coordinators, some 20 were from organizations other than UNDP (17 per cent) and 31 were women (26 per cent). By June 2001, out of 115 resident coordinators, some 22 (19 per cent) were from organizations other than UNDP and 30 were women (26 per cent). While representing an increase, these figures need to be constantly updated to take into account new appointments of resident coordinators. These numbers are projected to increase with a policy adopted by UNDG in late 2001 of all organizations proposing 50 per cent of their candidates as women for the resident coordinator assessment.

Problems encountered and lessons learned

16. While there has been much progress in the past year, especially through more rigorous selection and assessment procedures to enhance and diversify the pool of resident coordinators, the low numbers of women resident coordinators is a cause for concern. Decisions taken by UNDG in November 2001 aim at ensuring that 50 per cent of candidates proposed by all organizations, including UNDP, for the resident coordinator assessment are women. In addition, a more determined effort needs to be made to recruit a higher percentage of resident coordinators with

experience in humanitarian affairs to serve in countries in special development situations or in post-conflict country offices.

17. To monitor the training level of resident coordinators, the organizations represented on the UNDG Executive Committee agreed to financial arrangements for a 180-degree feedback exercise while the Inter-Agency Steering Committee on Resident Coordinator Competency Assessment agreed to take on the management of this task.

18. Finally, the length of time involved in the selection of resident coordinators means that reform of the inter-agency selection procedures is deemed necessary to ensure rapid placement. In particular, UNDG has agreed to publish the list of vacancies in advance and to expedite policies of the Inter-Agency Selection Panel in order to reduce to a minimum the time between the departure of one resident coordinator and the arrival of his/her successor in a country office.

Recommendations

19. The Council may wish to:

(a) Take note of the progress in broadening the pool of resident coordinators and of the efforts to promote a cultural and gender-neutral assessment in the selection of resident coordinators;

(b) Encourage all entities participating in the resident coordinator system to put forward for the assessment at least 50 per cent women staff members;

(c) Note the commitment to improving the assessment of resident coordinator and country team performance.

D. Implementation of the common country assessment and the United Nations Development Assistance Framework

20. During 2000, the United Nations Development Group continued to support the CCA/UNDAF process. The year 2000 witnessed the completion of 63 CCAs and 19 UNDAFs.

21. Progress has also been undertaken in terms of training. Most notably, some 60 staff members from organizations at country, regional and headquarters levels were trained at the United Nations Staff College in Turin as resource persons for CCA/UNDAF, anti-poverty strategies and team-building. A draft module linking the CCA/UNDAF process and the implementation of the millennium development goals and a module on poverty were developed.

22. In the course of 2001, an external evaluation of UNDAFs was undertaken by the Department of Economic and Social Affairs in preparation for the report of the Secretary-General on the comprehensive triennial policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system. Following this review, the UNDG Executive Committee, at its meeting on 6 July 2001, endorsed 22 recommendations submitted by the Programme Group of UNDG as a follow-up to the UNDAF external assessment and the workshop. A joint communication from the Executive Committee of UNDG to all resident coordinators and United Nations country teams requested them to review the recommendations of the assessment and the implications for their work at the country level.

Problems encountered and lessons learned

23. The evaluation of UNDAFs highlights the importance of obtaining inter-agency participation in the UNDAF exercises. Furthermore, UNDAF evaluations revealed that the national ownership of development strategies represents the most fruitful avenue for the preparation of an UNDAF that meets the needs of programme countries.

24. In addition, the need for the UNDAF to take into consideration, where relevant, humanitarian and post-conflict aspects was also brought out. In this respect, more than 10 United Nations country teams in countries in special development situations have finalized or are in the process of finalizing adopted CCAs, and 5 adopted UNDAFs for crisis and post-conflict countries. A review of CCAs and UNDAFs has been undertaken to determine the extent to which a conflict-prevention perspective is incorporated.

Recommendations

25. The Council may wish to:

(a) Welcome the efforts undertaken in increasing the number and the scope of common country assessments and United Nations Development Assistance Frameworks;

(b) Encourage resident coordinators and United Nations country teams to ensure full agency participation and to continue to improve the quality of UNDAFs and their responsiveness to national priorities;

(c) Welcome national ownership and leadership in the preparation of common country assessments and United Nations Development Assistance Frameworks.

E. Harmonization of programming periods and procedures

26. In its decision 2001/11, the Executive Board of UNDP/UNFPA encouraged programme countries that have already developed or are planning to develop a common country assessment/United Nations Development Assistance Framework jointly undertaken and approved by the Government to use it, on a pilot basis, as the common planning framework for United Nations operational activities at the country level, with effect from the annual session 2002.

27. Draft country outlines will be presented to the Executive Boards for discussion at their annual session where applicable; the CCA/UNDAF will be made available for information. Following review by the Executive Board, the country programme will be finalized, taking into account the comments made by the Board. The country programmes will be posted by October of the last year of the country programmes on the web sites of respective UNDG partners and will be approved in January on a no-objection basis without presentation or discussion unless at least five members have informed the secretariat in writing before the meeting of their wish to bring a particular country programme before the Executive Board.

28. In December 2001, the Administrator of UNDP and the Executive Director of UNFPA wrote to all country teams informing them of the new common

programming procedures and providing guidance to country teams on the preparation of country programme outlines and country programmes.

29. The past year has witnessed three important actions that complement the CCA and UNDAF as well as the adoption of a common approval process. These are the adoption of common strategies on poverty reduction and girls' education by UNDG and the issuance of guidelines on joint programmes. Draft guidelines on joint mid-term reviews of country programmes are also being piloted.

Problems encountered and lessons learned

30. Given the critical role to be played by the CCA/UNDAF process, it is essential that a strict timetable be adhered to in the preparation of UNDAFs.

31. With the adoption of a common programming procedure for UNDP and UNFPA, it is expected that the UNICEF and WFP Executive Boards will consider such a harmonized programme approval process early in 2002. The harmonization of programme approval processes also necessitates the development of a common structure for country programme documents in order to simplify procedures and reduce transaction costs.

Recommendations

32. The Council may wish to:

(a) Welcome the progress achieved by UNDP and UNFPA in the harmonization of country programme approval processes;

(b) Encourage the members of UNDG to continue efforts to harmonize country programme approval processes and a common structure for programme documents;

(c) Encourage all members of UNDG, in their harmonization and simplification efforts, to seek to reduce transaction costs of country programming.

F. Gender mainstreaming

33. UNDP country offices have reported an increasing use of the CCA and UNDAF mechanisms and the resident coordinator system for the promotion of gender equality and implementation of international commitments. Within the resident coordinator system, the gender thematic groups at the country level are the most common and active inter-agency coordination mechanisms. In most cases, UNDP is acting as leader in inter-agency cooperation through thematic groups.

34. Two thirds of UNDP country offices are supporting work on the advancement of women and gender-equality goals. Participatory approaches to policy formulation and the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action and the outcome of its five-year review as well as building national capacities for gender mainstreaming, especially through the collection and dissemination of data disaggregated by sex are among the more important aspects of this work.

Problems encountered and lessons learned

35. There is slow movement towards concrete action and tangible results from effective mainstreaming of gender as a cross-cutting issue in key development areas. Work on gender-disaggregated data needs to be expanded, especially to focus on indicators to monitor global commitments. The need also persists to develop further the UNDP institutional capacity for gender-mainstreaming into its practice areas and programmes with the necessary tools and methodologies for measuring progress. Mainstreaming gender into the UNDP six thematic practice areas is being strengthened at the corporate policy-formulation level. A similar effort should be reflected at the country level, with concrete action and tangible results built into the strategic results framework and the gender strategic results framework.

36. UNDP is making efforts to ensure that a comprehensive gender perspective is integrated into planning across all programme sectors in crisis and post-conflict situations. This includes the compilation of guidelines for field staff and the development of a gender-specific draft plan of action.

Recommendations

37. The Council may wish to:

(a) Welcome the improvements in gender mainstreaming, particularly through the UNDAF;

(b) Encourage the funds and programmes to ensure that UNDAF implementation supports gender-mainstreaming considerations;

(c) Encourage UNDP to strengthen the gender-sensitive components of the strategic results framework.

Gender balance

38. UNDP remains committed to full gender equality in its human resource policy and to zero tolerance for sexual harassment. It has redoubled its efforts to achieve gender balance, targeted by the organization for 2001. With recent appointments, UNDP has now four women out of a total of eight staff members at the Assistant Secretary-General level. Among UNDP national officers, women now constitute 38 per cent, nearing the 40 per cent target. Thirty-three per cent of deputy resident representatives are women while the goal of 38 per cent women resident representatives/resident coordinators will not be reached this year.

39. In the establishment of gender balance at UNDP, the most notable achievement has been the recruitment of the first group of young professionals in the leadership programme (LEAD). Out of 19 recruited professionals, 10 are women.

Problems encountered and lessons learned

40. Despite the improvements in gender balance at the senior and entry levels, efforts still need to be made to appoint and retain women at the mid-level of the organization's career structure. Recent policies to improve this balance, such as the work/life policy, are expected to lead to an improvement.

Recommendations

41. The Council may wish to:

(a) Take note of the improvements in gender balance at the senior and entry levels of the organization;

(b) Call for further efforts by UNDP to accelerate the achievement of institutional goals for gender balance, especially among resident coordinators;

(c) Continue to promote human resource policies that actively promote the careers of young women.

G. Evaluation

42. The realignment of the UNDP monitoring and evaluation instruments reinforces key dimensions of the strategic shift to focus on development results and outcome-level performance. The key methodological refinements involve improved measurement and assessment of the strategic results framework, capturing interventions such as policy advice, dialogue and advocacy, more rigorous definition and use of indicators, and assessing the partnership strategy that UNDP pursues towards the achievement of targeted results. Compliance with the results-based management and the simplification process will be reflected in the revision of the UNDP *Handbook on Results-Oriented Monitoring and Evaluation*, completed late 2001.

43. During 2000, UNDP completed testing the country-level impact assessment in Burkina Faso and Malawi. The objective of the assessment is to provide empirical evidence on the overall contribution and impact of UNDP interventions over an extended period of time while strengthening and refining the methodological tools and approaches to capture results and impact levels accurately.

44. In 2000, the first UNDP report on development effectiveness marked an initial effort to assess UNDP effectiveness in achieving desired development outcomes. The empirical evidence from the 2001 development effectiveness report confirms more forcefully the previous findings that UNDP performance is increasing in the achievement of project immediate objectives.

Problems encountered and lessons learned

45. The methodological refinements have brought out in particular the pressing challenge of making early progress in ensuring that empirical evidence plays a critical role in improving the quality and impact of UNDP-supported projects and programmes, as part of the UNDP overall knowledge management strategy.

Recommendations

46. The Council may wish to:

(a) Encourage UNDP to enhance substantive accountability further;

(b) Welcome the development of the country-level impact assessment methodology to provide an evaluation of the long-term impact of UNDP programmes.

H. Cooperation with the World Bank

47. Over the past years, a renewed dialogue between UNDP and the World Bank, including regular consultations between the Administrator and the President of the Bank, has contributed to identifying priority areas and developing partnership. Poverty reduction, governance and information technology offer a particularly strong potential for cooperation.

48. In the approach adopted in all areas, cooperation with the World Bank is developed in the context of UNDP partnerships with Governments in programme countries. Its central purpose is to increase the effectiveness of nationally owned development processes supported by UNDP in its work with Governments and other national entities.

49. Specific cooperation has been developing on poverty-reduction strategies, particularly Poverty-Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSPs) governance, with a particular emphasis on Africa, as well as information technology and the Global Development Gateway. Given the importance of poverty-reduction objectives, UNDP has been placing a strong specific emphasis on its dialogue with the World Bank on PRSPs and the contribution it can make, substance and process-wise, to PRSPs in programme countries. Last year, UNDP initiated a mechanism of joint review of cooperation, whereby two or three times a year UNDP and the World Bank would assess their cooperation in about 20 PRSP countries. The latest of such meetings was held in July 2001. A joint review of the poverty trust fund established by each institution was also held in UNDP headquarters to ensure that the two initiatives would be complementary.

Problems encountered and lessons learned

50. Although the relationship between the World Bank and UNDP has greatly improved over the past years, efforts still need to be made in terms of institutionalizing the relationship, in particular regarding participation of UNDP in the PRSP. The UNDG guidance note on PRSPs should allow a much clearer relationship between instruments such as UNDAF and PRSP.

51. In other areas of development cooperation, such as in HIV/AIDS, or post-conflict development assistance, a clearer division of labour between UNDP and the World Bank needs to be established and clarified. The possibility of a significant expansion of the World Bank's grant assistance will require a clear delineation of roles and responsibilities.

Recommendations

52. The Council may wish to:

(a) Welcome the adoption of a UNDG guidance note to United Nations country teams on the Poverty-Reduction Strategy Paper;

(b) Welcome the dialogue between UNDP and the Bretton Woods institutions;

(c) Encourage the growing dialogue in order to establish closer linkages among instruments such as the United Nations Development Assistance Framework and the Poverty-Reduction Strategy Paper where applicable;

(d) Invite the Bretton Woods institutions to cooperate more closely in the development of common country assessments and United Nations Development Assistance Frameworks.

II. Follow-up to major conferences and summits and the Millennium Declaration

53. UNDP has been designated by the Secretary-General to coordinate country-level assistance from the United Nations system to monitor progress towards development goals set out in the Millennium Declaration. The Secretary-General has mandated DESA to monitor global progress towards the achievement of the goals.

54. UNDP has led the UNDG effort to clarify and define the framework of the millennium development goals, targets and indicators under the auspices of the Office of the Secretary-General and in cooperation with DESA, United Nations specialized agencies, funds and programmes, the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund and the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development.

55. A UNDG guidance note on reporting on the millennium development goals at the country level was prepared and adopted by UNDG in November 2001. To date, reports are being piloted in 13 countries. The first such pilot, in the United Republic of Tanzania, was presented to the Economic and Social Council at its 2001 substantive session. In addition, UNDP has provided, through UNDG, substantive contributions to the Secretary-General's Road Map on the implementation of the Millennium Declaration.

56. In his capacity as Chairman of UNDG, the Administrator has been tasked with the conduct, with United Nations partners, of a major advocacy and mobilization campaign targeted at national and global opinion. Preparatory planning has already commenced for this campaign.

Problems encountered and lessons learned

57. Despite the relatively recent adoption of the Millennium Declaration, a large proportion of country teams made significant efforts to reorganize the reporting of their activities in accordance with the millennium development goals. Thus, CCA indicators include, but are not limited to, the indicators developed to monitor the millennium development goals.

58. A challenge remains, however, in establishing links between coordination instruments such as CCAs and UNDAFs and the millennium development goals. Thus in the annual reports of the resident coordinators, several country teams stated that the CCA provided them with a tool for assessing progress made towards the implementation at the national level of the goals and targets set out in the global conferences. The challenge is thus to retain the country-led specificity of the CCAs and UNDAFs while meeting international commitments made at the Millennium Summit.

Recommendations

59. The Council may wish to:

(a) Welcome the development of the indicator framework for the implementation of the millennium development goals as a way to strengthen conference follow-up and monitoring of the goals at the country level;

(b) Encourage country teams to monitor follow-up to global conferences and summits, especially through the goals and targets of the Millennium Declaration;

(c) Request the United Nations Development Group to report to the Economic and Social Council at its substantive session in 2002 on the achievement of millennium development goals reports.

III. Follow-up to special economic, humanitarian and disaster-relief assistance

60. After rounds of intensive consultations with the members of the Executive Board and with various operational partners on the roles of UNDP in crisis and post-crisis scenarios, the Board adopted decision 2001/1 of 5 February 2001 on the role of UNDP in crisis and post-conflict situations.

61. In its effort to link relief, rehabilitation and development in post-conflict and natural disaster situations, UNDP is now introducing the transition recovery programme concept, which involves the mobilization of transition recovery teams, with a view to supporting the United Nations country teams in initiating appropriate and timely support for early recovery. Shortly after the devastating earthquake of January 2001, for example, a pilot transition recovery team was dispatched to Gujarat, India.

62. Within the United Nations system, UNDP is responsible for providing capacity-building assistance to mine-affected countries and addressing the socio-economic aspects of landmine contamination. In 2001, UNDP undertook capacity-building activities in 16 countries and raised over $30 million to support them.

63. UNDP continued to play an active role in strengthening regional, national, and local capacities in natural disaster prevention, preparedness, mitigation and recovery. During 2001, this has included support to over 50 programmes at country and regional levels.

Problems encountered and lessons learned

64. In order to ensure true sustainability, priority attention will be given to support national efforts and ensure maximum collaboration with local authorities, civil society, and the communities concerned in the decision-making and implementation process.

65. Work is ongoing to strengthen partnership in the area of crisis prevention and recovery, ranging from the launching of a joint review of the UNDP/World Bank collaboration in the post-conflict situations, to complementary work for disarmament, demobilization and reintegration in the Great Lakes region.

Recommendations

66. The Council may wish to:

(a) Take note of the development by UNDP of the transition recovery programme and encourage it to ensure coordination with the ongoing efforts of other relevant organizations;

(b) Support efforts to ensure that the Resident Coordinator serves concurrently as Humanitarian Coordinator, where appropriate;

(c) Stress the importance, in recovery programmes of country-led activities while ensuring maximum cooperation of local authorities, civil society and communities concerned in implementation and decision-making.

Part two
Report of the Executive Director of the United Nations Population Fund

The present report has been prepared in conformity with a joint format agreed by the United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations Population Fund and the United Nations Children's Fund covering the list of issues identified in consultations among United Nations Development Group (UNDG) members. The main issues include: implementation of the reform programme of the Secretary-General and the provisions of the triennial comprehensive policy review; follow-up to the international conferences and millennium development goals; and humanitarian and disaster-relief assistance. The report draws on the Synthesis Report of the Resident Coordinator Annual Reports, which was prepared by the United Nations Development Group Office and circulated in October 2001.

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I. Implementation of the reform programme of the Secretary-General and the provisions of the triennial comprehensive policy review

A. Structures and mechanisms

1. In 2000, the UNDG tightened its support mechanism, creating two working groups — one dealing with programme issues, the other with management issues — each chaired by an Assistant Secretary-General, rotating each year by agency. These two subsidiary groups enable the UNDG to interface more effectively with the Board of Executive Chiefs of the United Nations System (the former Administrative Coordination Committee (ACC)) in addressing system-wide operational and coordination issues.

2. The UNDG proved a useful mechanism in 2001 in efforts to harmonize the UNFPA and UNDP programming processes. The UNDG Programme Group, chaired by UNFPA, reviewed various options for ensuring a more substantive involvement of the members of the Executive Boards of UNICEF, UNDP/UNFPA and WFP in the programme development process as well as options for further streamlining and integrating the programme development processes of the four organizations. UNFPA and UNDP presented the proposals of the Programme Group to their Executive Board at its annual session 2001.

3. The resulting decision, 2001/11, effectively harmonizes the programming processes of the two organizations. It also provides an opportunity for members of the Board to contribute to the process of formulating country programmes prior to their finalization while ensuring that the process is country-led and country-driven and based on national priorities and needs.

4. Following decision 2001/11, an inter-agency working group developed a new and common format for country programme outlines and documents. The new format was transmitted to all Resident Coordinators and UNFPA Representatives in November. As noted by the UNDP Administrator and UNFPA Executive Director in the accompanying memorandum, a harmonized programming process provides an ideal opportunity to move the Secretary-General's reform agenda forward, as well as to bring about joint or closely coordinated planning and formulation exercises of new country programmes, mobilize additional resources, and increase and strengthen national ownership over the programming process.

5. The UNDG Programme Group has also played a pivotal role in bringing about a more coherent and coordinated United Nations policy dialogue at the country level. It has developed guidance notes on: (a) the follow-up to the United Nations General Assembly Special Session on HIV/AIDS; (b) the tracking of the millennium development goals (MDGs) at the country level; (c) the role of the United Nations in Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP) processes; (d) the United Nations Girls Education Initiative (GEI); and (e) incorporating early warning and conflict prevention in CCA/UNDAF processes.

Problems and lessons learned

6. The UNDG has proven to be an effective mechanism for advancing the reform of the Secretary-General and implementing the provisions of the triennial

comprehensive policy review. It has also been a very useful forum for policy dialogue as well as for addressing system-wide programme and management issues. The tightened support structure has improved the UNDG's efficiency and effectiveness, particularly of its ad hoc working groups, which now have clearly defined time frames and expected outputs. This has enabled the UNDG to sharpen the focus of the working groups, clearly define their expected outputs and abolish the working groups once they complete their tasks.

Recommendations

7. The Council may wish to:

(a) Take note of the role of the UNDG and the UNDP/UNFPA Executive Board in harmonizing the programming processes of UNFPA and UNDP;

(b) Welcome the efforts of the UNDG to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of its working groups and to clearly define their time frames and expected outputs.

B. Funding and resources

8. UNFPA's regular resource situation improved in 2000, increasing by 4.3 per cent, from $249.8 million in 1999 to $260.7 million in 2000. This increase reversed a decline in UNFPA's regular resources that had begun in 1996. Many of the Fund's major donors, especially the Netherlands, Sweden, Finland and the United States, which returned as a donor after a one-year hiatus, were mainly responsible for the improvement in the resource situation. Also noteworthy was the fact that UNFPA has been able to expand its donor base, reaching a target of 100 donors in 2000 and surpassing a target of 110 donors in 2001. This was a direct response to Executive Board decision 98/24, which recognized that over-dependence on a limited number of donors posed a risk for the long-term financial sustainability of UNFPA (para. 1). The expanded donor base reflects the widespread support UNFPA receives from the programme countries it assists as well as the recognition that resource mobilization is a collective responsibility of both UNFPA and all the members of the Fund.

9. UNFPA has striven within the context of its multi-year funding framework (MYFF) to obtain multi-year pledges in order to ensure greater stability and predictability in the Fund's resources. While UNFPA is grateful that a number of its major donors have been able to provide multi-year pledges, the majority of the Fund's top donors have not been able to do so.

10. Supplementary, or non-core, resources increased dramatically in 2000, reaching their highest level ever, $103 million. This included very large contributions from the Netherlands and the United Kingdom for contraceptive commodity procurement. There were other large supplementary contributions from such donors as the European Union, Norway and Canada. The trend for donors to provide supplementary resources is increasing and is expected to continue through 2001 and into 2002.

11. In 2001 and 2002, UNFPA resource mobilization goals will concentrate on increasing core resources in response to growing programme requirements including HIV prevention. The Fund will seek to strengthen its partnerships with all donors, and especially with lower level major donors with the aim of increasing their share

of UNFPA's core resources, and to obtain as many new multi-year pledges as possible.

Problems and lessons learned

12. Although UNFPA's core resources increased in 2000, there is continuing concern about maintaining this momentum through 2001 and beyond. Indeed, core resources are still far short of the $310 million estimated for 2001. It is an encouraging sign that members of the European Community are giving serious attention to the possibility of increasing their respective levels of official development assistance (ODA), with the aim of reaching the target of 0.7 per cent of gross national product (GNP) for ODA. The commitment to increase ODA would benefit all United Nations organizations, provided those organizations are able to demonstrate results with the assistance they provide. Moreover, while most donors support the principle of multi-year pledges, many are not in the position to translate this into practice as their current budgeting practices do not accommodate such pledges.

Recommendations

13. The Council may wish to:

(a) Take note of the slight increase in the core resources of UNFPA in 2000 and encourage donors to continue to increase their contributions to UNFPA if they are in a position to do so;

(b) Emphasize the role of Governments in making funds available for the country programmes they approve;

(c) Emphasize the collective responsibility of UNFPA and the members of the Fund in mobilizing resources to support the work of UNFPA;

(d) Encourage Governments to adapt their budgeting procedures, if feasible and appropriate, to accommodate multi-year pledges.

C. Resident coordinator system

14. During 2001, UNFPA participated in efforts to strengthen the resident coordinator system in such areas as the performance appraisal of resident coordinators and country teams; the selection process through the Inter-Agency Advisory Panel; the competency assessment exercise; and the annual reporting by resident coordinators.

15. The Inter-Agency Advisory Panel reviewed resident coordinator selection procedures and practices with a view to streamlining the selection process, fast tracking the selection of resident coordinators and humanitarian coordinators, and managing and expanding the pool of resident coordinators. The panel gave special attention to finding ways to improve planning to fill vacancies, shorten the recruitment and clearance process, fast track candidates to serve in countries in crisis, and create a better gender balance among resident coordinators (ideally from the current level of 25 per cent women to 50 per cent).

16. In the recent competency assessment exercise, approximately 55 per cent of the 67 candidates were from UNDP and 45 per cent were from other organizations.

Approximately 30 per cent were women, although the gender balance varied from organization to organization.

17. At present, there are no resident coordinators from UNFPA.

Problems and lessons learned

18. Broadening the pool of resident coordinators remains a concern, as less than 20 per cent of the resident coordinators are from outside UNDP. The Inter-Agency Advisory Panel is therefore exploring ways of generating more candidates both internally and externally. Also, for the first time six candidates from outside the United Nations system participated in the competency assessment exercise. The competency assessment exercise has improved, in part as a result of the selection of a new company to conduct the exercise and in part as a result of the commitment of the inter-agency steering committee to find ways to improve the calibre of candidates.

Recommendations

19. The Council may wish to:

(a) Reaffirm the need to broaden the pool of resident coordinators;

(b) Welcome the efforts of the Inter-Agency Advisory Panel to improve vacancy management of resident and humanitarian coordinator posts, shorten recruitment and clearance processes and bring about a better gender balance among resident coordinators.

D. Implementation of the CCA and UNDAF

20. In 2001, the Executive Committee of the UNDG continued efforts to accelerate the introduction and completion of CCAs and UNDAFs. A primary concern was to ensure that the CCA and UNDAF processes did not place an additional burden on United Nations country teams or on national capacities. The Executive Committee therefore instructed the UNDG Programme Group to propose concrete steps to make the CCA and UNDAF an integral part of the respective programming processes of the funds and programmes and to find ways to streamline their programming procedures. The resulting report that was submitted to the UNDP/UNFPA Executive Board highlighted the importance of the CCA/UNDAF in programme development based on national priorities (see paras. 3-5 above).

21. In October 2001, the United Nations Development Group published and distributed the Synthesis Report of the Resident Coordinator Annual Reports for 2000. The annual reports offer a wealth of information on the CCA and UNDAF processes. For example, the CCAs and UNDAFs are said to be catalysts in building cooperation with other partners, including the World Bank, and to have paved the way for joint and collaborative programming, particularly in the areas of HIV/AIDS, poverty reduction and humanitarian assistance. Enhanced collaboration with the World Bank is seen in the increasing number of countries reporting linkages between the CCA and UNDAF processes, Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSPs) and Comprehensive Development Frameworks (CDFs). Nonetheless, a number of country teams reported difficulties in completing their UNDAFs, owing

in part to the absence of a resident coordinator and/or delays in ensuring full government participation in the process, among other things.

Problems and lessons learned

22. The CCA and UNDAF have become effective instruments for inter-agency collaboration at the country level. However, greater efforts are needed to ensure government ownership and participation throughout the process and to keep transactional costs at a minimum. Moreover, support from headquarters is needed to ensure that individual country programmes and projects derive from the UNDAF rather than being developed parallel to it. Nonetheless, the UNDAF can be only as successful as the core resources that can be made available to implement it.

Recommendations

23. The Council may wish to:

(a) Reiterate the importance of country ownership and leadership of the UNDAF process;

(b) Welcome the catalytic role of the CCA and UNDAF in building cooperation among partners, including the World Bank, and in paving the way for joint and collaborative programming;

(c) Note the importance of the UNDAF as a common planning framework in the programming processes of the respective United Nations agencies;

(d) Reiterate the need to ensure that participating organizations have the requisite resources to implement the UNDAF;

(e) Welcome the Synthesis Report of the Resident Coordinator Annual Reports and the wealth of information and lessons learned it provides on the CCA and UNDAF processes.

E. Harmonization of programmes and procedures

24. Harmonizing programmes and procedures is a top priority of all the funds and programmes, and the UNDG has proven to be an ideal mechanism to foster and promote this. This is especially evident in the synthesis report of the annual reports of the resident coordinators, which highlights efforts and lessons learned in three priority areas in particular: joint programmes and projects; joint mid-term reviews of country programmes and UNDAFs; and administrative procedures for national project personnel.

25. The UNDG issued guidance notes to guide efforts in each of these areas. The guidance note on preparing joint programmes and projects was disseminated in August 2000. The one on the proposed procedures for joint mid-term reviews is currently being field tested by several country teams. The guidance note on the harmonization and coordination of the pay and daily subsistence allowance (DSA) rates for national project personnel was issued in early 2001.

26. As noted in the synthesis report, many country teams are undertaking joint programmes and projects in a number of areas, including: HIV/AIDS (Angola, Botswana, China, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lesotho, Madagascar,

Malawi, Mongolia, Mozambique, South Africa); poverty reduction, girls' education, alternative development (Fiji, Ghana, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Sao Tome and Principe); gender (Ghana); and human rights, peace and development, post-conflict and humanitarian issues (Angola, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Mongolia, the Philippines).

Problems and lessons learned

27. Initial efforts in each of these areas have provided a wealth of lessons learned, many of them focusing on difficulties arising from differing or conflicting priorities and procedures of the various agencies involved, in particular as concerns financial regulations and programming processes. But if the lessons learned tend to reveal inherent weaknesses and limitations in harmonization efforts, the various joint processes show potential for finding solutions to address these weaknesses and limitations. Moreover, it is hoped that decision 2001/11 adopted by the UNDP/UNFPA Executive Board will effectively harmonize the programming processes of UNFPA and UNDP.

Recommendations

28. The Council may wish to:

(a) Take note of the efforts of the UNDG to harmonize and simplify United Nations procedures in the priority areas of joint programming, joint mid-term reviews and administrative procedures for national project personnel;

(b) Encourage the United Nations funds and programmes to continue their efforts to further harmonize and simplify their procedures based on the lessons learned from the joint exercises under way in various programme countries.

F. Gender mainstreaming

29. UNFPA continues to focus on the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) mandate of advancing gender equality and equity, empowering women, eliminating all kinds of violence against women, and ensuring women's ability to control their own fertility as cornerstones of population and development. Key activities during 2001 focused on ensuring that the gender perspective was appropriately mainstreamed in the subprogrammes of the Fund's core programme areas and that the requisite resources for gender concerns were allocated and properly coded in programme budgets to reflect UNFPA's commitment to gender issues. UNFPA also organized the *Consultative Meeting on the Impact of Conflict on Women and Girls* in November 2001 in order to mainstream a gender perspective in UNFPA's operations in emergency situations.

30. The Fund reinforced efforts at the country level to build national capacities on gender issues through strengthening the technical capacity of UNFPA Country Technical Services Teams (CSTs), including, for example, developing a comprehensive training manual on gender, population and development and conducting a workshop of training of trainers in September 2001 for CST advisers. UNFPA also provided technical inputs on gender and HIV/AIDS in the preparation for the United Nations General Assembly Special Session on HIV/AIDS and organized a high-level panel discussion on this issue.

31. UNFPA produced and piloted *A Practical Approach to Gender-Based Violence: A Programme Guide for Health Care Providers and Managers* in order to strengthen the incorporation of such an approach to gender-based violence in reproductive health care. It also undertook special efforts to collect and disseminate sex-disaggregated data and conducted studies on such issues as the eradication of female genital cutting and violence against women and girls. The Fund supported efforts by international NGOs and United Nations agencies to develop special initiatives for empowering women and girls, including developing indicators and technical documents with guidelines on the design and implementation of programmes to eradicate female genital cutting, with special reference to monitoring and evaluation.

Inter-agency level

32. At the inter-agency level, UNFPA continues to be an active member of the Inter-Agency Meeting on Women and Gender Equality (IAMWGE), participating in the following IAMWGE task forces:

(a) Mainstreaming a gender perspective in Common Country Assessments and the United Nations Development Assistance Frameworks, where comments on CCA/UNDAF country processes are made and a training manual on the process is being developed;

(b) Women, peace and security. The results of the above-mentioned Consultative Meeting on the Impact of Conflict on Women and Girls will contribute to the United Nations system-wide study on the same subject;

(c) Gender mainstreaming in programme budgets;

(d) Financing for development.

Problems and lessons learned

33. As more and more governments recognize the need to address gender issues in their programmes, the need to develop technical capacities at the country level has risen. Moreover, various trends, such as globalization, have introduced new complexities that affect women's and men's reproductive well being. This requires forging strategic partnerships with other organizations in order to successfully address reproductive health needs comprehensively. However, developing successful partnerships is time-consuming and labour-intensive, so results are not immediate in the short term.

34. There are many emerging issues, such as trafficking in women and girls, whose gender dimensions have an impact on the health of women and girls in particular. Developing appropriate responses requires consultation with all partners in order to develop strategies that can make optimal use of the comparative advantages of all those involved, including UNFPA.

G. Gender balance within UNFPA

35. UNFPA is committed to gender mainstreaming at all levels of the organization. This is true in theory and practice. Women occupy nearly 50 per cent of the Professional posts in UNFPA, including those at the P-5 level at headquarters.

Moreover, 8 of the 15 members of the Fund's Executive Committee are women, and two of the three members of UNFPA's top senior management team are women, including the Executive Director and the Deputy Executive Director for Management.

Recommendations

36. The Council may wish to:

(a) Take note of the Fund's commitment to gender mainstreaming in both theory and practice and the corresponding activities and achievements in this area;

(b) Welcome the United Nations system-wide study on women, peace and security and the various mechanisms contributing to it, including the *Consultative Meeting on the Impact of Conflict on Women and Girls* organized by UNFPA.

H. Capacity-building

37. The development of national capacity was established as one of the critical factors in the Key Actions for further implementation of the ICPD Programme of Action. It is also one of the main strategies of the Fund's multi-year funding framework (MYFF) results framework that define the ways in which the Fund deploys its resources to obtain results.

38. In 2001, strengthening national capacity-building remained a vital dimension of programming at all levels of UNFPA operations, from assisting in policy formation at the highest level of government institutions to training health personnel for service delivery at the primary health-care level.

39. UNFPA country offices in all regions made national capacity-building a priority and used the largest share of their resources in this strategy area. This is particularly relevant in the case of Africa and in category "A" priority countries, where a special focus on national capacity-building is essential. The needs in such countries, however, are often so great that it is difficult to address them. Nonetheless, certain needs in capacity-building in the area of population and development must be addressed as a matter of urgency. These include increasing knowledge on reproductive health, population and gender issues; improving skills in programme design, monitoring, evaluation and reporting; strengthening data collection, analysis and dissemination; and improving programme management and coordination.

40. UNFPA is currently carrying out an in-depth evaluation of national capacity building, the findings and recommendations of which will be reported to the Executive Board at its annual session in June 2002 as part of the Executive Director's annual report on the MYFF. The purposes of the evaluation are twofold: (a) to analyse UNFPA's support during the most recent country programme cycle to develop the capacity of government counterpart institutions and national NGOs in reproductive health and population and development; and (b) to provide guidance to UNFPA on the best approaches in the future to develop national capacities in the areas of reproductive health and population and development strategies.

Problems and lessons learned

41. Information gathered in the context of the situation analysis of the UNFPA multi-year funding framework point to the shortage of qualified and motivated personnel, limited understanding of programming areas, and poor coordination of efforts, and resources as major constraints in capacity-building. Isolated training initiatives, especially when undertaken without a systematic needs analysis or a firm commitment to make use of this training, are not effective. The Fund thus increasingly encourages increased participation in joint needs assessments with Governments and other agencies, especially within the context of UNDAF, to develop training strategies.

42. Capacity-building is a long-term investment in people. The right choice of capacity-building modalities is therefore crucial. Countries must ensure that national counterparts are identified and trained and carry out the functions for which they are trained. Moreover, national support units must be brought into the mainstream of operations so that they can gain knowledge of emerging issues, be responsive to sector reforms and sector-wide approaches (SWAps), and develop appropriate gender-sensitive tools, indicators, and methodologies.

Recommendations

43. The Council may wish to:

(a) Encourage all United Nations agencies to share experiences, undertake joint exercises, and develop joint strategies for capacity-building;

(b) Encourage efforts to build national capacity in gaining knowledge of emerging issues, responding to innovative approaches and developing tools and methodologies.

I. Common premises and services

44. The issue of common premises and services is a continuing focus of attention of all the funds and programmes at both the country and headquarters levels. At the country level, according to the synthesis report of the annual reports of resident coordinators, the country teams are making steady progress in these areas. The reports identify both benefits and constraints. The benefits include, among others, increased efficiency, reduced costs and increased visibility of the United Nations at the country level. The constraints include the lack of a suitable building or sufficient space within a building and the divergent administrative systems and lack of resources, particularly for such items as information technology, connectivity and personnel procedures.

45. At the headquarters level, the UNDG Subgroup on Common Premises and Services provides support for the efforts at the country level, including in the areas of connectivity and information technology. At present there are 46 officially designated United Nations houses, 5 of which were designated in 2001. Although not officially designated as United Nations houses, country teams share premises in many other countries as well.

Problems and lessons learned

46. The pace of establishing United Nations houses slowed in the past two years, as the programme got off to a quick start by taking advantage of the relatively easy opportunities for establishing such houses in 1998 and 1999. Nonetheless, the targets set for 2000 and 2001 were largely met. To facilitate the process of establishing United Nations houses, the UNDG Subgroup is further developing guidelines and models and continuing to review proposals for such houses.

Recommendations

47. The Council may wish to:

(a) Take note of the progress made in establishing United Nations houses;

(b) Take note of the benefits of common premises and services at the country level and encourage the United Nations funds and programmes to take the actions necessary through the UNDG to address constraints in these areas.

J. Cooperation with the World Bank

48. Cooperation between UNFPA and the World Bank continued to increase during the year through country-level activities and through participation in various seminars and working groups covering a wide range of issues and areas of mutual interest. Such interaction helped the two organizations to identify priority areas for cooperation and to define ways to maximize the effectiveness of this cooperation. Contraceptive commodity security is a notable area in this regard. UNFPA also participated in various World Bank "E-discussions" on such topics as civil society and the World Bank and the World Bank's performance in promoting environmental sustainability, among others.

49. In the area of reproductive health, the collaboration between the World Bank and UNFPA includes the co-sponsorship, along with UNDP and WHO, of the Special Programme on Research, Development and Research Training in Human Reproduction (HRP), as well as joint World Bank/UNFPA participation in such inter-agency efforts as safe motherhood and adolescent reproductive health. In December 2001, the World Bank Institute held a workshop to adapt its three-week course on reproductive health and health sector reform to meet the specific needs of UNFPA staff. In addition, in order to promote reproductive health issues in country-level programmes, the World Bank, WHO and UNFPA are jointly organizing a workshop on "Effective Partnerships to Accelerate Implementation of Reproductive Health Programmes", which will be held in early 2002.

50. The PRSP process was the focus of several important seminars and workshops. A videoconference meeting of the World Bank-United Nations Learning Group reviewed PRSP processes and products in four countries: Cambodia, Ghana, Nicaragua and the United Republic of Tanzania. A World Bank seminar on making cooperation more effective in realizing the international development goals (IDGs) that were put together by OECD-DAC in 1996 focused on the PRSP as an important vehicle for ensuring coherence in poverty-reduction efforts at the country level and synthesizing national poverty strategies.

51. In conjunction with a joint UNDG/World Bank monitoring exercise of PRSP implementation, UNFPA assessed the extent to which UNFPA country offices in the 14 pilot countries of the monitoring exercise had been involved in PRSP processes. In particular, the UNFPA inquiry focused on: (a) the extent to which the country offices were involved in the PRSP process; (b) their perception as to whether the process was country-owned; (c) whether the process was helping to build partnerships; (d) whether the exercises were giving due weight to social-sector and gender issues; and (e) whether the PRSP process was being discussed within the resident coordinator system.

52. The inquiry found that most of the UNFPA country offices had been involved in PRSP processes to varying degrees, typically being introduced to the process through the resident coordinator system, United Nations theme groups or meetings organized by the World Bank, rather than directly through interaction with the government itself. The country offices did feel, however, that the World Bank and IMF had worked hard to create an enabling environment for government ownership of the process and that the PRSP was being developed by building on ongoing national poverty reduction initiatives. The country offices felt that the PRSP process was a far more participatory process than past initiatives of the World Bank and IMF and that the process was helping to build and strengthen partnerships, not only between the World Bank/IMF and United Nations agencies but also with all other partners in the country including the government and civil society. The offices also reported that social-sector issues and gender concerns were a major focus of discussions in developing PRSPs in their countries.

Problems and lessons learned

53. The increased interaction between UNFPA and the World Bank has clearly contributed to a more participatory interaction between the two organizations at both the headquarters and country levels. The Fund's involvement in PRSP processes is a case in point. As noted above, the PRSP processes in the 14 pilot countries seem to be on track as far as the points raised in the inquiry are concerned. But it is imperative that the PRSPs ensure national ownership at the beginning of the process and sufficiently address such issues as population and development linkages, reproductive health, HIV/AIDS, gender and human rights, among others.

Recommendations

54. The Council may wish to:

(a) Take note of the increased cooperation between UNFPA and the World Bank, particularly in promoting effective partnerships in implementing reproductive health programmes and in PRSP processes at the country level;

(b) Encourage UNFPA country offices to participate in PRSP processes at the country level and to make use of such processes to advocate for increased investment in basic social services, including reproductive health services;

(c) Take note of the joint UNDG/World Bank exercise to monitor the implementation of the PRSP processes in 14 pilot countries.

K. Monitoring and evaluation

55. UNFPA in 2000 initiated a revision of the monitoring and evaluation directives in its programme guidelines in an effort to bring them in line with a results-based approach. This also entailed the revision of programme planning and reporting formats with a view to highlighting the importance of identifying and tracking results as well as to operationalizing the logical framework (logframe) approach in programme monitoring and evaluation. The new formats were disseminated in 2001.

56. The Fund continued to support its Evaluation Network focal points in UNFPA CSTs. An annual meeting of CST focal points and the Fund's Office of Oversight and Evaluation (OOE) was held in an effort to share experiences and promote consensus within the Network on new approaches to results-based monitoring and evaluation of UNFPA's programmes and projects. It also provided Network members with an opportunity to strengthen their facilitation and negotiation skills.

57. In 2000, UNFPA launched the Programme Manager's monitoring and evaluation toolkit. The toolkit is intended to supplement the UNFPA programme guidelines by providing further guidance and options to improve the Fund's monitoring and evaluation practices. Tools are posted on the UNFPA intra- and Internet web sites.

58. To build country office and CST capacity, UNFPA conducted two in a series of regional training workshops to promote results-based programme and office management. These workshops provided an overview of results-based management and its implications for both programme and office management, emphasized the use of the logframe as a tool for programme design, monitoring and evaluation, and examined key elements of monitoring and evaluation practices as well as office and programme management issues derived from the findings of audits and policy application review exercises. Additional workshops were conducted in other regions in 2001. UNFPA also responded to individual country office requests for technical assistance on monitoring and evaluation by organizing in-country workshops that focused on the identification and selection of indicators, linkages between results at the different levels of subprogrammes, and the development of monitoring and evaluation activities plans.

Lessons learned

59. Workshop activities provided very useful feedback that was and is being used to inform the design and content of other training activities in terms of providing more time for group work and sharing of experiences. The feedback was and is also invaluable for the refinement of monitoring and evaluation policies and procedures.

60. Capacity-building activities also pointed to some programme and monitoring and evaluation methodological issues. For instance, where UNFPA support is a relatively small portion of total resources for the national population programme, national partners essentially still adhere to a project-based approach and are not necessarily conversant with the concept of subprogrammes or what UNFPA-supported subprogrammes are supposed to do. Another example is the difficulty experienced in applying the logframe approach in programmes that cover many small countries such as the UNFPA subregional programme in the South Pacific.

61. Activities cited above underscored the importance of ensuring a common understanding among UNFPA headquarters, country offices and CSTs of results-based management and the logframe as a programme planning and monitoring instrument. In order for monitoring and evaluation to be conducted with a results-based approach, counterparts and programme partners must share this common understanding. The nurturing of such understanding is a long-term investment, particularly given staff turnover in many programme countries.

Recommendations

62. The Council may wish to:

(a) Take note of the efforts to bring UNFPA's monitoring and evaluation directives in line with a results-based approach and to build the capacity of its country offices and CSTs in results-based programme and office management.

II. Follow-up to international conferences and the millennium development goals

63. UNFPA attaches great importance to the follow-up of international conferences and the millennium development goals (MDGs). The Fund plays a major role in advocating for and assisting countries in achieving ICPD goals and the key actions agreed at the ICPD+5 review held in 1999. The organizational priorities for UNFPA in 2001 strongly reflect this, particularly those in the substantive areas of the Fund's work. These priorities serve as the framework for the annual work plans of all UNFPA offices and staff at all duty stations.

64. The organizational priorities enable UNFPA to focus its work within each of the Fund's three core programme areas, particularly in the following substantive areas as endorsed in Executive Board decision 2000/11: (a) the further operationalization of the reproductive health approach; (b) integration of population issues in development; (c) integration of gender concerns in population and development; and (d) the integration of sociocultural and behavioural dimensions of population, reproductive health and gender.

65. The substantive areas derive directly from the key actions for the further implementation of the ICPD Programme of Action that emerged from the five-year review in 1999. The first substantive area noted above focuses on UNFPA playing the lead role in implementing the strategy for reproductive health commodity security and on identifying the priorities and strategic focus of UNFPA's work in reducing maternal mortality and morbidity, addressing the reproductive health needs of adolescents and preventing HIV/AIDS. The second area involves defining UNFPA's strategic focus in the area of population and development strategies through a re-examination of the linkages between population and development and of the impact of globalization processes. The third area focuses on developing a strategy to address gender-based violence as well as the tools to appraise and monitor the mainstreaming of gender in programmes. The fourth area focuses on the conceptualization and operationalization of advocacy and behavioural change interventions.

66. The Fund's substantive priorities are also designed to strategically position UNFPA within the millennium agenda, enabling it to help countries pursue the

millennium development goals, especially in the areas of improving maternal health, reducing maternal mortality, preventing HIV/AIDS, promoting gender equality and empowering women, and reducing child mortality. They also seek to maximize the effectiveness of the support UNFPA provides to national poverty-eradication and sustainable development programmes.

67. UNFPA is committed to achieving the millennium development goals and to the MDG monitoring and reporting process outlined in the guidance note prepared by the UNDG. The Fund firmly supports the guidance note's view that the MDG reports will help provide a systematic and identifiable follow-up to the global conferences and world summits of the 1990s, including the ICPD. This is especially important in keeping a focus on the importance of reproductive health and of population issues in the development process. UNFPA also agrees that the reports are an important tool for awareness-raising, advocacy, alliance-building, and renewal of political commitments at the country level.

68. UNFPA was very active during the year in the follow-up to the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) through the task manager system. In its capacity as task manager of Chapter 5 of Agenda 21, the Fund prepared a policy report on demographic dynamics and sustainability. It prepared a similar report for the organizational session of the preparatory committee for the World Summit on Sustainable Development as well as a report on sustainable development, population, environment and poverty for the second session of the preparatory committee, which will be held in January/February 2002. UNFPA also prepared a note on the implementation of operational activities in the area of population, environment and sustainable development for the 34th session of the Commission on Population and Development. The Fund also made the complex relationship between population and environmental change the focus of this year's *State of World Population* report, which is the major media and advocacy event of the year for UNFPA.

69. The Fund participated in various forums and workshops, including a four-week World Bank electronic discussion evaluating the Bank's performance in promoting environmental sustainability and a World Bank presentation entitled "Commitment to Guardianship: Building Effective Development through Environment and Social Sustainability". UNFPA also participated in a workshop on Poverty Alleviation and Sustainable Development organized by the International Institute for Sustainable Development.

Problems and lessons learned

70. The Millennium Declaration mainstreamed a set of interconnected and mutually reinforcing development goals into the global agenda. The MDGs incorporate most of the goals and targets set at the global conferences and world summits of the 1990s. As indicated in the guidance note prepared by the UNDG on reporting on the MDGs, the goals should be considered flexibly for county-level monitoring, bearing in mind in this regard that other goals and targets such as, for example, those on reproductive health set at the ICPD are also important in monitoring human development and in contributing to the eradication of poverty.

Recommendations

71. The Council may wish to:

(a) Take note of the role of UNFPA's organizational priorities in pursuing the goals of international conferences and summits as well as the millennium development goals;

(b) Welcome the UNDG guidance note on reporting on the millennium development goals;

(c) Emphasize the importance of monitoring and reporting on goals and targets of the various international conferences and summits that may not be explicitly incorporated in the millennium development goals.

III. Humanitarian and disaster-relief assistance

72. UNFPA provides support for reproductive health for communities in crisis situations on the basis that reproductive health needs continue, and even escalate, during conflict and disaster situations and that all people, regardless of their geographic location, have a right to reproductive health. The Fund is committed to protecting the health of women, men and youth and works to ensure that all individuals, regardless of their status or condition, have access to reproductive health services. UNFPA also works to raise awareness among United Nations agencies, partners, donors and programme countries of the need for reproductive health information and services in emergency situations.

73. Since it first began emergency-relief operations in 1994, UNFPA has supported emergency reproductive health projects in more than 50 countries and territories. It has made significant strides in raising awareness about reproductive health needs in emergencies, in working with partners to develop technical standards in the area, and in improving the capacities of UNFPA country offices around the world to respond to emergencies. Currently, UNFPA has more than 30 projects in operation in this area.

74. UNFPA is currently upgrading its Humanitarian Response Group (HRG) to meet the increasing demand for the Fund's expertise in the humanitarian field, aiming to provide a swift, integrated response to emergencies and requests for support from field offices. UNFPA also provides support, through its Humanitarian Response Group, for emergency-related advocacy and awareness-raising as well as for donor relations and information. To maximize its capacities in advocacy and fund-raising in this area, the Fund is developing strategies and tools to demonstrate the impact of reproductive health services and information in emergencies. UNFPA continues to aggregate valuable experience in data collection, analysis and application that is routinely made available to field offices and partners in emergency situations. In many cases, UNFPA has been able to develop or provide from previous experience the demographic data necessary to carry out humanitarian needs assessments as well as to formulate rehabilitation plans.

75. UNFPA has been and continues to be active in needs assessments led by the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) and in supporting relief-intervention monitoring systems through the establishment of basic indicators and implementation of surveillance systems. These database development activities, which are a standard part of UNFPA programmes, are increasingly in demand in emergency and crisis situations, as are reproductive health kits, which are now routinely made available to United Nations agencies and other partners.

UNFPA also addresses violence against women, provides assistance for mental health counselling for youths and seeks to ensure that reproductive health is part of health-sector rehabilitation. UNFPA fully supports all activities initiated by the Secretary-General to protect all United Nations staff members and humanitarian assistance personnel in emergency and other areas of United Nations functioning.

Problems and lessons learned

76. Despite numerous successes and demonstrated long-term benefits to programme countries, the overall impact of UNFPA activities in crisis situations is constrained by the limited success in mobilizing outside funds for humanitarian projects, including those sought through the Inter-Agency Consolidated Appeals process, and in part by operational constraints brought on by the Fund's limited institutional capacity. In 2000, some improvement was seen in fund-raising and UNFPA's institutional capacity, but the gap between reproductive health needs in emergencies and UNFPA's ability to respond to those needs remains considerable. Moreover, there is still a great need to sensitize policy makers and the general public to the issues of reproductive health assistance during emergencies. Prominent among those issues are gender concerns and reproductive health, including family planning and sexual health.

Recommendations

77. The Council may wish to:

(a) Reaffirm the need for special protection measures for all vulnerable people, especially women and girls, in conflict situations;

(b) Call for all possible measures to protect United Nations staff and respect the privileges and immunities granted to them under international law;

(c) Urge measures for timely responses to provide immediate support for reproductive health and data needs in emergency and crisis situations, and encourage the efforts made by UNFPA in this area;

(d) Urge measures to raise awareness and sensitize the international community to the need for reproductive health information and services in emergency and crisis situations, and encourage the efforts made by UNFPA in this area.

IV. Recommendations

78. The Executive Board may wish to:

(a) Take note of the present report;

(b) Decide to transmit it to the Economic and Social Council, together with the comments and guidance provided by delegations at the present session.

Part three
Extract from the report of the Executive Board of the United Nations Development Programme and the United Nations Population Fund on its first regular session of 2002

28 January-8 February 2002

United Nations Development Programme

1. The Associate Administrator introduced the report to the Economic and Social Council for 2001 (DP/2002/7). It focused on three main topics: (a) implementation of the reform programme and provisions of the comprehensive triennial policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system for 2001; (b) follow-up to major conferences, summits and the Millennium Declaration; and (c) follow-up to special economic, humanitarian and disaster-relief assistance.

2. The Associate Administrator stressed that one of the main pillars of the reform programme had been the development of structures and tools that allowed for greater coherence in policy, procedures and operational activities for development. A joint group on Afghanistan comprising the United Nations Development Group (UNDG) and the Executive Committee for Humanitarian Affairs (ECHA), for example, had been established to guide the operational response of the United Nations in that country.

3. Progress had continued to be registered on United Nations houses, with five new houses established in 2001. Discussions on best practices and lessons learned in the preparation of the common country assessment (CCA) and the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) had also been facilitated thanks to the establishment of Internet services for UNDG members: UNDG DevLink and the CCA/UNDAF learning network, RCNet.

4. The development of the CCA and UNDAF had received strong support. In evaluating those instruments, Member States and the Department of Economic and Social Affairs in the United Nations Secretariat had made valuable suggestions for their improvement.

5. UNDP had made progress towards enhancing the harmonization of programming procedures with those of other funds and programmes in compliance with comments by the Economic and Social Council and the Executive Board. In its resolution 56/201, the General Assembly had called for more rapid progress with specific timetables established for the achievement of harmonization of financial, administrative and personnel systems. Those recommendations would form an integral part of the UNDG programme of work in 2002.

6. UNDP continued to strengthen the resident coordinator system by hiring highly qualified staff and implementing a new modality to assess the competencies of candidates. More efforts, however, were still needed to improve the gender balance in that regard. UNDG had, therefore, adopted a policy in 2001 encouraging all organizations to propose a 50 per cent ratio of women as candidates for resident coordinator assessment. Efforts were also under way to improve the assessment of serving resident coordinators and to work towards a 180-degree feedback system. The need to recruit more resident coordinators with humanitarian experience for

countries in special development situations or in post-conflict countries had been stressed.

7. Gender mainstreaming continued to be a vital part of UNDG activities. The analysis of CCAs and UNDAFs and reports from two thirds of UNDP offices showed that there had been increasing programming for gender mainstreaming and greater inter-agency coordination. Room for improvement nevertheless remained, including the development of gender-disaggregated data sets and the mainstreaming of gender in planning across all programme sectors in post-conflict situations.

8. Coordination with Bretton Woods institutions had been enhanced particularly in the preparation, at the national level, of poverty reduction strategy papers (PRSPs) at the country's request.

9. Regarding follow-up to major conferences, there had been considerable emphasis on commitments, goals and targets contained in the Millennium Declaration. Campaign efforts had begun to raise awareness of the importance of achieving those goals, including country pilot activities to prepare analytic reports on progress towards the achievement of those goals and commitments.

10. On follow-up to special economic, humanitarian and disaster-relief assistance, UNDP provided a strong link in relief, rehabilitation and development operations. To ensure the sustainability of those efforts, cooperation with national and local entities and organizations of civil society had become vital.

11. With reference to the earthquake disaster in Gujarat, India, the Associate Administrator reported that UNDP had quickly dispatched a transition recovery team. The involvement of national staff in the effort was very strong and had resulted in considerable capacity-building. Valuable lessons had also been learned for future actions in natural disaster prevention, preparedness, mitigation and recovery.

Comments by Executive Board Members

Quality of the report

12. Many delegations congratulated UNDP for the high quality of the report and its presentation based on the UNDG common format. One speaker called for an improvement in the analytical part of the otherwise comprehensive and informative report.

Coordination and cooperation with other partners

13. Some speakers supported the initiatives by UNDG to organize a coordinated approach to operational activities for development. A cohesive, coordinated and harmonized approach to development, they noted, enhanced the value of technical support to programme countries in their efforts to implement the millennium development goals, including the overarching goal of halving poverty by 2015, in an increasingly interdependent and complex world. The collaboration of UNDP within the United Nations system was evident in the quick response to provision of humanitarian assistance in crisis situations, such as in Afghanistan and India.

14. Although closer collaboration with other development partners was stressed, it was advised that such relationships should be complementary so that the mandate

and comparative advantages of UNDP and its universality, neutrality and impartiality would be maintained and its programmes of support would remain country-driven and owned.

Resident coordinator system

15. Delegations noted with appreciation the efforts to broaden the selection pool of resident coordinators and the setting-up of the competency assessment facility. Such arrangements would enhance the range of high-quality resident coordinators who led the country office teams in an efficient and effective manner. Well-qualified and experienced resident coordinators constituted a vital component in ensuring that CCAs and UNDAFs were well prepared in collaboration with and in agreement with Governments. Some speakers urged that more efforts should be made to diversify the pool of candidates and to improve gender balance.

Funding issues

16. Some delegations underscored that regular (core) resources constituted the bedrock of UNDP activities. While more remained to be done, the reversal in the decline of core resources was highly applauded and demonstrated that the donor community and programme countries were happy with the direction in which the new UNDP was headed. The increase in non-core resources was also appreciated as a complement to the regular funds. There was a suggestion that an equitable allocation of resources among regions should be undertaken.

Response

17. The Associate Administrator thanked the delegations for their constructive and positive comments on the report. He promised that every effort would be made to improve the analytical content of future reports.

18. On gender balance and gender mainstreaming, he regretted that many women were not yet in the requisite high-level positions to qualify as candidates for resident coordinator positions. He assured the Executive Board that efforts would be stepped up within UNDG to diversify the pool of candidates and to improve gender balance.

19. With regard to collaboration with international financial institutions and, in particular, the World Bank, the Associate Administrator elaborated on the complementary nature of their relationship with UNDP. He observed, for example, that the poverty analysis approach used in national human development reports and CCAs had served as a model for PRSPs, which were linked to the Highly Indebted Poor Country Initiative, committed to reducing external debt with savings allocated to social sectors in order to reduce absolute poverty. As a trusted adviser to programme countries, UNDP had helped to facilitate the preparation of PRSPs by Governments.

20. The Executive Board took note of the UNDP report to the Economic and Social Council (DP/2002/7) and agreed to submit it and the comments made thereon to the Council.

United Nations Population Fund

21. The Deputy Executive Director of UNFPA introduced the report to the Economic and Social Council (DP/FPA/2002/1). He highlighted the importance of Executive Board decision 2001/11, which had effectively harmonized the programming processes of UNFPA and UNDP and provided an opportunity for Board members to contribute to the formulation of country programmes. He called attention to the emphasis in the report on the role of the United Nations Development Group (UNDG), and noted that the report drew liberally on the Synthesis Report of the Resident Coordinator Annual Reports that had been prepared by the UNDG Office. He also made reference to the examination in the report of gender mainstreaming in the mandate and programme of UNFPA, participation by country offices in the poverty reduction strategy papers (PRSP) process, and efforts to ensure that the work of the Fund contributed to the Millennium agenda.

Comments by delegations

22. In commenting on the report, a number of delegations said that they found the report to be useful and informative. Some asked that future reports be more analytical and less descriptive. Delegations expressed support for the recommendations in paragraph 71 on follow-up to international conferences and summits and the millennium development goals and underscored the need for national ownership and leadership of the common country assessment (CCA) and the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) processes.

23. There was widespread support for the emphasis on gender mainstreaming, although one delegation suggested that the report should have explicitly supported women's abilities to improve their own reproductive health. One delegation applauded the attention UNFPA had given to the issue of violence against women and girls and asked for more details regarding the approach of the Fund to addressing gender-based violence in reproductive health care and on the outcomes of the piloting of the publication, *A Practical Approach to Gender-Based Violence: A Programme Guide for Health Care Providers and Managers*.

24. One delegation encouraged both UNDP and UNFPA to address the problems documented in the Triennial Comprehensive Policy Review assessments of the CCA and UNDAF processes. The same delegation also cautioned of the undesirability of using a results-based approach as a primary determinant for the global allocation of resources. Although this delegation recognized the usefulness of monitoring and evaluation in ensuring that resources were managed strategically, it was concerned that excessive emphasis on short-term results could distort the priorities of the organizations.

25. A number of delegations welcomed the efforts UNFPA had made to enhance cooperation with the World Bank, and asked to hear more about cooperation in the area of reproductive health commodity security. Some delegations, however, expressed the view that UNDG collaboration with the World Bank was complex and that the CCA and UNDAF processes should remain country driven and not be subject to conditionalities.

26. Several delegations agreed on the need to establish a more diverse pool of resident coordinators, with a better gender balance as well as greater participation by

agencies other than UNDP. One delegation asked for explanations of possible reasons for the gender imbalance, while another expressed concern that the proposal to implement a 50 per cent quota might not be the most effective way to correct the problem. Another delegation stressed the importance of gender sensitivity and a gender-balanced approach.

27. One delegation recommended that UNFPA and UNDP follow the practice of UNICEF of announcing contributions during the first Board session of the year instead of at the annual session of the Board, as was the current practice.

Response of the Administration

28. In replying to the various comments and questions, the Deputy Executive Director thanked the delegations for their comments and for their support of the harmonization of activities by UNDG agencies. He took note of the delegations' strong interest in gender sensitivity and reported that the programme guide on gender-based violence was in the process of being tested.

29. In response to the request for more information on the work of the Fund in the area of reproductive health commodity security, he asserted that UNFPA was a global leader in this area, a role that had been recognized at the May 2001 meeting in Istanbul on securing contraceptives and condoms for HIV/AIDS prevention. UNFPA was now working with its partners to translate the global agenda into country-specific plans.

30. He responded to concerns about the Fund's increasingly close partnership with the World Bank by saying that the UNDG agencies and the Bretton Woods institutions had different comparative advantages. UNFPA was aware of the importance of maintaining a clear line in its relationship with such institutions. Concerning the gender imbalance in the Resident Coordinator system, he said there were various explanations, including the reluctance of some agencies to give up qualified staff, particularly women, as well as concerns about career development.

31. The Deputy Executive Director closed his remarks by saying that future reports would be more analytical.

32. The Director of the Strategic Planning and Coordination Division agreed with the comment that it was not sufficient to be gender-sensitive but that it was critical to have a gender perspective as well. He noted that the experience of the Fund in the PRSP process had been mixed and said that he hoped to see more linkages between population and development issues and poverty in the future. He concluded by emphasizing the progress made by UNFPA in the area of reproductive health commodity security, and affirmed that this would remain one of the top priorities of the Fund.

33. The Executive Board took note of the UNFPA report to the Economic and Social Council (DP/FPA/2002/1) and agreed to submit it and the comments made thereon to the Council.